

BULLETIN

CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

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"The family is a less formal organization than the state, the church, or an industry. Nevertheless, it is an organization, and within the family parents occupy the position of constituted authority. Happy is that family in which the constituted authority of parents is also inherent, in which the respect of children may be gained not merely because children MUST obey their parents but because with regard to the important issues of life the judgment of parents has earned respect."

—PORTER R. LEE, *The Family*, July, 1923.

To MEMBERS:

WHAT OUR QUESTIONNAIRE SHOWS

ABOUT three months ago the League addressed a few questions to agencies, institutions, and state boards, some of whom were members of the League, with the idea of discovering in what direction changes of policy were tending. It was thought that this material would be interesting both for members and for groups without experience who might be contemplating some work with children.

Twenty-four agencies using family homes, four agencies not using family homes (S.P.C.C.'s, etc.), eight institutions, four state boards answered. All of the answers spoke of radical changes in policy in the course of their history. Prominent among these changes are the adoption of case work methods and increasing care in their use. On the part of eleven agencies, the statement is made that a definite effort is now made to keep families together or rehabilitate them. Undoubtedly others who do not mention this aspect of their work do the same thing. It is interesting as a change from the point of view of former days. Two of the institutions report the same effort.

Twelve agencies say definitely that more careful study of the individual child, using psychological or psychiatric assistance, is their next step, either as a development of work already begun or as new development. Two of the institutions say the same thing, and one of the state boards. Still more of the answers speak of improved medical care and supervision.

In answer to the question why the changes were undertaken, three institutions report that they changed to the cottage system in order to get a more normal environment. Two state boards reply that in the lessened

use of institutions and more general and carefully supervised use of family homes they were striving for better service to the children and also economy of expenditure. Three agencies were influenced to begin using family homes in order to meet the need for expansion in their work. It is certain that others have likewise expanded their work many times in this same way, though they do not report this as an incentive to change. Fifteen of the agencies say definitely that dissatisfaction with old methods and an effort to serve individual children more adequately impelled their adoption of the changes indicated.

One institution reports that the 1919 Washington Conference brought about its change from congregate to cottage system, with the installation of a boarding-out system.

The dates when these changes were made are interesting. Of course, not all organizations could date their changes in policy, for the reason that these were too gradual, but one gave 1897, another 1904, two 1908, two 1910, one each 1913, 1914, 1915, and 1916. All the rest date their changes after 1918. This is interesting because it illustrates the acceleration of self-criticism which has developed in the last few years. Dissatisfaction with their own methods, self-studies, surveys, and general self-criticism seem to be behind these recent developments. Undoubtedly this is a healthy state of mind and a leading reason for the improvement in methods.

The questionnaire sought to elicit some information about the extent to which family homes are available for those agencies which use them. All of the agencies and institutions wrote that they are able to find sufficient family homes for their work, although some added that the search had to be persistent and was becoming increasingly difficult as resources of communities were used up, particularly where several agencies use this method of care. In some answers it was stated that boarding homes were difficult to secure; in other answers, on the contrary, free foster homes presented the difficulty. One correspondent, who is working in a particularly congested city, wrote that it was always difficult but that no one had the right to say that it was impossible, and that they had increased the number of their foster homes as rapidly as their work demanded by the use of more and more intensive methods.

A number of agencies say that they cannot meet the needs of their communities because of insufficient funds or staff. On the contrary, the institutions report that they do meet the needs of the communities where they are located. Likewise the state boards consider that they can care for the children in their states with the machinery which they now have. One state board is planning to use family homes for certain types of defective children.

In all of these answers there is nothing very new or startling. It was not expected that there would be, but it is significant how complete the agreement is in the matter of individualizing by means of careful study of each child; how often the answer is sincerely made that the new methods are to serve the children better, and how by these means larger numbers of children can be served. It is in a small way a picture of what we are often told is going on in the country. In view of such answers, gathered from Massachusetts to California, it would seem that these trends are rather general.

We appreciated when we sent these questions out that they went to busy executives, and we hope that the material they have supplied will be of use to other people in guiding policies.

THE AMERICAN LEGION PLANS

A committee of the American Legion was appointed at the New Orleans convention in 1922 to prepare plans, including estimates of cost, for taking care of the dependent children of ex-service men. The Legion feels very keenly that it has an obligation to these children and is more or less determined that it, and not any other organization, shall give them the assistance that they may need. Various plans have been discussed by the members of this committee, of which Mr. George A. Withers, of Clay Center, Kansas, is Chairman, and the committee is instructed to report at the San Francisco convention in October.

The League's Committee on Group Movements in Child Care has been in touch with a number of the leaders of the Legion in different states and with members of this committee. Their attitude has uniformly been one of cordial appreciation of any assistance and advice which professional organizations can make available for the working out of their problems. They realize what a large and complicated task they have undertaken in attempting to draw up a program suitable for the whole country, with its varying conditions in facilities already existing and possibilities of organization.

So far Michigan is the only state in which the Legion has embarked on a new undertaking, and there they have been spurred on, by reports of children of ex-service men in need of care, to secure from the legislature

a grant of \$25,000, which, with money to be raised by popular subscription, they are using to start a small cottage institution.

Sentiment among Legion leaders has not crystallized in favor of any one method of caring for the soldiers' children, and our Committee has tried to insist on the necessity of a variety of methods of care being provided, both in order to meet the needs of the children, and also to fit in with the differing developments in the various states.

The Legion project has such large possibilities for good or ill that the League members are rightly very much concerned that it be well planned. So far the disposition of the Legion leaders is to take advantage of all the experience which is brought to their attention, so that the chances of their avoiding mistakes are good.

A STUDY OF THE INTERRELATION OF THE WORK OF NATIONAL AGENCIES

This interesting study, "Report of a Study of the Interrelation of the Work of National Social Agencies in Fourteen American Communities," was made through the National Information Bureau by Mr. Porter R. Lee, Mr. W. W. Pettit, and Miss Jane M. Hoey, in an effort to discover what local agencies think of the national organizations with which they are affiliated or which work in their communities. Necessarily, much of the study is in the form of criticism, but much of that is constructive. Some communities were clearly the victims of too much attention on the part of national organizations. Others had profited by such contacts and valued them highly. In some communities it was felt that the chief interest of national organizations was the raising of their budgets; while in other places it was recognized that national organizations are both necessary and useful, and that they are responsible for much of the success of social work over the country.

An interesting criticism is that local agencies are co-ordinating their program and work much more rapidly and efficiently than are the national organizations, and there was in many places a definite demand that this co-ordination be achieved. And finally, the study well brings out the fact that the influence of all of the national organizations in the thinking of local communities is more or less affected by the work and standing of each one, so that success or failure in a given community on the part of one national organization may help or hinder the cause of another not even remotely connected.

The Child Welfare League touched eleven of the fourteen communities which were studied. The study says of the League and similar organizations, "It is important to recognize the differences in control over locals

held by different national organizations, because for those organizations having no legal control but depending merely upon the force of leadership, the problem of leadership is in many ways more difficult than for the others. This is especially true of an organization like the Child Welfare League, which came into existence in 1920. The Child Welfare League has initiated no new local branches. Its service is primarily to established organizations, many of them with a long history. Many of them are working with traditional methods and according to deeply entrenched standards. It is usually a more difficult task to modify the standards and the practices of old established agencies than it is to formulate new standards and secure their adoption by newly created agencies."

THE SCHOOL AND THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

Under this caption, Dr. Helen T. Woolley, Assistant Director of the Merrill-Palmer School in Detroit, read a most interesting paper at the National Conference in Washington, reprinted in "Mother and Child," July, 1923, in which she describes the work and some of the accomplishments of this school.

Dr. Woolley points out that as soon as one's interest becomes centered on a preventive program one is pushed further and further back in the lives of individuals in an effort to reach the causes of wrong behavior and maladjustment which will bring adolescent and adult difficulties.

In the Merrill-Palmer School there are about thirty-five children under the age of five who spend the greater part of their days at the school, having their lunch there and their afternoon nap as well. The school was founded for the teaching of motherhood, and so is in part a laboratory, both for the study of the children and for the discovery of what parental training should include. Speaking of the ill success of some parents Dr. Woolley says—"We get nowhere by blaming individual parents. Society has allowed them to think that bringing up their children to suit themselves—not to suit the neighbors or the state—was entirely satisfactory until the children were five or six years old. At no time have the parents been given any systematic instruction with regard to the difficult task of providing suitable physical, educational, and emotional environment for young children—nor are they given any organized assistance in carrying out the task. There is no doubt that everything which promotes general education, and helps to produce a better type of individual, makes for better parents. However, there is a specific body of information about the physical care, the mental care, and the social training of young children by which parents of any grade can profit, and which is at no time made a part of public education."

ESTIMATING JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

The California Bureau of Juvenile Research publishes as Monograph No. 2 of the Journal of Delinquency an interesting account of an attempt to measure juvenile delinquents by other than simple intelligence tests. The title is "The Estimation of Juvenile Incorrigibility," and the study was made by Mr. Vernon M. Cady, M.A. Dr. Lewis M. Terman contributes a commendatory foreword, in which he says—"The original intention of Mr. Cady and of the advisory committee was to make a fairly inclusive study of the child's moral traits, but as the work proceeded it was found advisable to limit the objective to testing for factors involved in 'incorrigibility.' Although the tests used have yielded lower reliability and validity coefficients than an optimist might have hoped for, the results are very encouraging."

By means of a variety of tests, some devised by himself for this study, Mr. Cady not only works for a personality analysis, but also definitely attempts and in some measure succeeds in securing data which indicate the moral traits of the children studied. He discusses all of the tests used and their results in considerable detail and gives full tables illustrative of the results he obtained. Workers having to do with behavior problems in connection with clinics will undoubtedly find this monograph suggestive.

"SUMMER COMPLAINT"

Under this general heading there are several detailed and valuable articles in the June number of "Hygeia," of the American Medical Association. One article by Victor C. Vaughan, "Summer Diarrhea of Infants," discusses the influence of feeding and use of cow's milk when a substitute must be found for breast milk. An article by Julius H. Hess, "Mother's Milk—Nature's Birthday Gift to the Baby," not only treats of the effects of proper feeding on the baby, but discusses the mother's health, food, exercise, and general care of her physical condition, so that she may nurse her infant successfully.

We have been informed by the American Medical Association that a sample copy of "Hygeia" is being sent to each member of the League.

CHILD WELFARE NEWS

From the June number of "Mother and Child" we quote the following daily routine of the children in the Grand Rapids Preventorium:

"The children rise at 6.30 and each one is given something to do, such as sweeping floors and making beds. The older ones under supervision help to dress the younger ones. In a way, these services are voluntary on the part of the children. Breakfast is at 7.30, followed by an hour's play out-of-doors. School is from 9 to

10.15, followed by a glass of milk and a half-hour rest period. Another hour of school precedes the 11.45 to 12.45 dinner hour, and a 15-minute rest comes before the afternoon session. School again is from 1.00 to 3.00; milk at 3.00; rest from 3.00 to 4.00; play out-of-doors from 4.00 to 5.15; supper from 5.30 to 6.00, and games and so forth from 6.00 to 7.30. The small children go to bed at 7.30 and the older ones at 8.00."

In 1865, Volume I of the "Little Wanderer's Advocate" contained the following statement of the object of the New England Home for Little Wanderers: "The object of this organization shall be to rescue children from want and shame, to provide them with food and clothing, to give them instruction for the mind and heart; to place them, with the consent of their parents or legal guardians, in Christian homes; and at the discretion of the managers, to afford relief to the destitute in connection with the families of poor children, and to furnish moral and religious culture to the ignorant and neglected."

"1865—Old Doctrine But Still Sound—1923," is the comment Mr. Cheney C. Jones, Superintendent, makes in this year's annual report.

The Child Welfare Association of Porto Rico, whose office is at Central Aguirre, has completed its first year of work; 934 children under six have passed through its hands for physical examination, and many of these cases have been visited by nurses in follow-up work; 10 children were sent to hospitals for tonsil and adenoid operations. It is planned to extend the work by organizing leagues for girls from ten to fourteen years of age, with classes in home hygiene, and for the older girls classes in the care of the sick.

One of our members, returning home from the National Conference on Saturday evening, June 2d, found the following message:

"5 P. M. Mr. B., of Prescott, Arizona, is thinking of leaving in the morning unless he can get some encouragement in regard to adopting a child. If you can give him encouragement he will stay over a couple of days. Call him at the _____ Hotel, Room 910. If he is not there leave word with the clerk there. They are going to the theatre and won't be back until late."

Our correspondent adds, "I have never heard of him before or since."

The American Child Health Association has just published a "Statistical Report of Infant Mortality for 1922 in 635 Cities of the United States." While this is not complete nor as accurate as the census will be, it is available almost a year in advance of the census report, and its statistics are very illuminating, as showing the need of both birth and death registration and of effort

in all child health measures. Curiously the Association had more difficulty in getting reports from cities in some of the best organized states than it had from those in remote districts. The tables are elaborate and run over twelve years.

The problem of children in sugar beet raising is being recognized in many parts of the country. Nebraska is trying to provide school facilities by means of a summer session, but that this will succeed seems very doubtful, in view of the poor success of a similar plan in Michigan. This great industry is more and more receiving the attention of child labor organizations as one of the largest employers whose industry demands great numbers of children.

ENCLOSURES

(Sent to members only)

The enclosures for this month are the following:

1. Directory of Members, Fifth Edition, 1923.
2. Literature of the Florida Children's Home Society.

LIBRARY LIST NUMBER 22

PAMPHLETS

1. Books for Boys and Girls. American Educational and Industrial Union, Boston, Mass. 1922. A 140-page classified list of books for children.
2. Child Labor in the Sugar Beet Fields of Michigan. This is a study by the National Child Labor Committee, made in the summer of 1922. Its results are compared with the previous study made by the Federal Children's Bureau. Both show serious conditions affecting child workers.
3. Home Making. An outline of the way the Merrill-Palmer School teaches normal and college students.
4. Kentucky Children's Code Commission, A Report of the. This covers child welfare legislation prior to and through the legislature of 1922, picturing a steady effort to improve Kentucky's care of its children.
5. Nutritional Phases of Health Program in Elementary Grades. A teaching outline worked out by and used in the Merrill-Palmer School, Detroit.
6. Some-Kind-Of-Educated. Elizabeth Taylor Shipley describes the scholarship work of the White-Williams Foundation and its contact with schools and families in the capacity of counsellor.
7. Standards of Public Aid to Children in Their Own Homes. By Florence Nesbitt. This is publication No. 118 of the Federal Children's Bureau, reviewing the results of mothers' aid in several typical urban and rural communities. (The Children's Bureau will supply a copy of this pamphlet to members of the League on application to the Bureau.)